

**VANDENBERG AIR FORCE BASE
INSTALLATION RESTORATION PROGRAM
COMMUNITY ADVISORY BOARD
MEETING MINUTES
04 March 2004**

Ms. Bea Kephart called the Vandenberg Air Force Base (AFB) Community Advisory Board (CAB) meeting to order at 1000 hours. Ms. Kephart welcomed the CAB members and introduced Mr. Tom Churan, Environmental Flight Chief, who co-chaired the meeting in Col Thompson's absence. Dr. Roger Welt and Mr. Churan thanked all the CAB members for coming and introduced a potential new candidate for CAB membership, Mr. Leo Havener from Vandenberg Village Community Services District (CSD).

Ms. Kephart outlined the meeting's agenda:

- Installation Restoration Program Overview;
- Snowy Plover Update;
- Munitions Response Program;
- Member Questions/Comments; and
- Closing Remarks.

Installation Restoration Program Overview

Ms. Kephart proudly announced to the CAB that Vandenberg's IRP Group received the General Thomas D. White Award for best IRP the Air Force Space Command (AFSPC). She thanked the CAB for their support in winning the award, as the community relations program is evaluated for the award. The IRP will be completing remedial investigation (RI) reports with ecological risk assessments. Release of these reports may be delayed due to DTSC reviews of human health and ecological risk assessments. The base is trying to negotiate a schedule with DTSC and is recommending that RI reports for remote sites bypass review by a toxicologist.

The IRP also presented peer review packages for remedial action construction projects at AFSPC during the week of 20 January 2004. Results of these meetings are as follows:

- Site 50 was not approved for Interim Removal Action. The base will complete additional investigation and treatability studies.
- Site 19 was approved for in-situ treatment of the Volatile Organic Compound (VOC) contamination source area with hydrogen releasing compounds (HRC).
- Site 15 was approved for treatment of the VOC contamination source areas with HRC. This will include a phytoremediation study of the impact of native willows at San Antonio Creek.

Beach Access and the Western Snowy Plover at Vandenberg AFB

Ms. Nancy Francine briefed the CAB on the results of the 2003 snowy plover nesting season and Beach Management Plan for 2004. The counts taken during snowy plover monitoring for 2003 were the highest recorded since the monitoring program began in 1993. The breeding population at the North Beach totaled 99, and Surf/Wall Beaches totaled 182 (the highest population of any site in California).

In 2003, reproductive success rates at Vandenberg AFB indicated a 51 percent nest hatch rate, and 43 percent fledging success. At Surf Beach there was a 67 percent nest hatch rate, and 42 percent fledging success rate. This hatch rate was the highest ever recorded at Surf Beach. The same enforcement measures used in 2001 and 2002 were implemented in 2003. Base security forces were augmented by civilian and contractor patrols at the beaches. A constant enforcement presence occurred during open beach periods on Friday through Monday from 0800 to 1800 hours. Regular patrols occurred during closed beach periods, and fences and signs clearly delineating closed beach boundaries were also posted. Docents were available to explain beach rules to visitors and provide better enforcement and documentation. This helped decrease the violation totals in 2003 to only 17 at Surf Beach and zero at Wall and Minuteman Beaches, a record low for Vandenberg AFB.

Beach management in 2004 will be the same as in 2003. The United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) Biological Opinion remains in effect, and therefore, Vandenberg AFB will continue to evaluate beach management annually. The long-term plan for the base is awaiting the approval of the final USFWS Recovery Plan. This results of 10 years of monitoring launches and other operations indicate that there is no mission impact to the species or habitat. Current beach management supports the Vandenberg AFB mission, snowy plover recovery, and recreational beach access.

Munitions Response Program

Mr. Ron MacLelland presented the next briefing, which was on a new restoration program called the Munitions Response Program (MRP). The MRP will be funded by AFSPC for the cleanup of closed range areas. The initial funding projected from AFSPC is estimated at \$246M; for Vandenberg AFB the program is estimated at \$209M. Funding will become available in FY05, but will come out of the IRP, as will the funding for FY06. By FY07 and FY08, the MRP will pay back the IRP.

The MRP is segregated into two categories: operational ranges and other-than-operational ranges. Operational ranges are classified as active (currently being used by the base) and inactive (not being used, potential for use in the future). Other-than-operational ranges are classified as closed (taken out of service, but still under DoD control), transferred (transferred to another entity and no longer under DoD), and transferring (to be transferred to another entity). There are a total of 65 ranges in the AFSPC inventory of which 44 are other-than-operational, and 21 are operational. Vandenberg AFB has the highest number of other-than-operational ranges in AFSPC, totaling 18.

To cleanup munitions ranges on Vandenberg AFB, the IRP will closely follow the CERCLA process to include: (1) Preliminary Assessment and Site Investigation (PA/SI), (2) Remedial Investigation, (3) Feasibility Study, and (4) Record of Decision. A range inventory was conducted on Vandenberg AFB in 2001, and then updated again in 2002 and 2003. The inventory identified 18 closed ranges, 2 small active ranges, and 1 transferred range. A PA/SI of the closed ranges will begin in FY05. These ranges comprise an area of more than 23,000 acres. The training and maneuvering areas that provide access to these ranges is comprised of more than 48,000 acres.

Vandenberg AFB currently has two active ranges that are used for small arms range training and emergency detonation of unexploded ordnance (UXO). The only types of ordnance discovered to date on the base include practice mines and rockets, and artillery. The goals of the MRP cleanup program include determining the density of UXO contamination and rendering all suspected UXO sites safe. No UXO incidents have occurred at Vandenberg AFB to date. The base will evaluate and conduct site remediation of UXO and its constituents to satisfy all federal, state, and Air Force regulations, as necessary.

Member Questions/Comments

Dr. Linda Fargo commented that the document review subcommittee (DRC) responded to a request from the Environmental Flight to review proposed Department of Defense changes to the Restoration Advisory Board rule to conform to US Code, Title 10, Subtitle A, Part IV, Chapter 160, Section 2705, Notice of Environmental Restoration Activities. The DRC is reviewing the proposed rules to see how they might apply to the CAB.

Dr. Fargo asked for additional DRC volunteers and mentioned that if anyone is interested in joining the subcommittee to contact her at the end of the meeting.

Closing Remarks

Dr. Welt congratulated the Vandenberg AFB group for winning the Thomas D. White Award, "Best IRP in Space Command." The meeting was adjourned at 1130 hours. The next quarterly CAB meeting is scheduled for 10 June 2004 in the 30 MXG conference room.